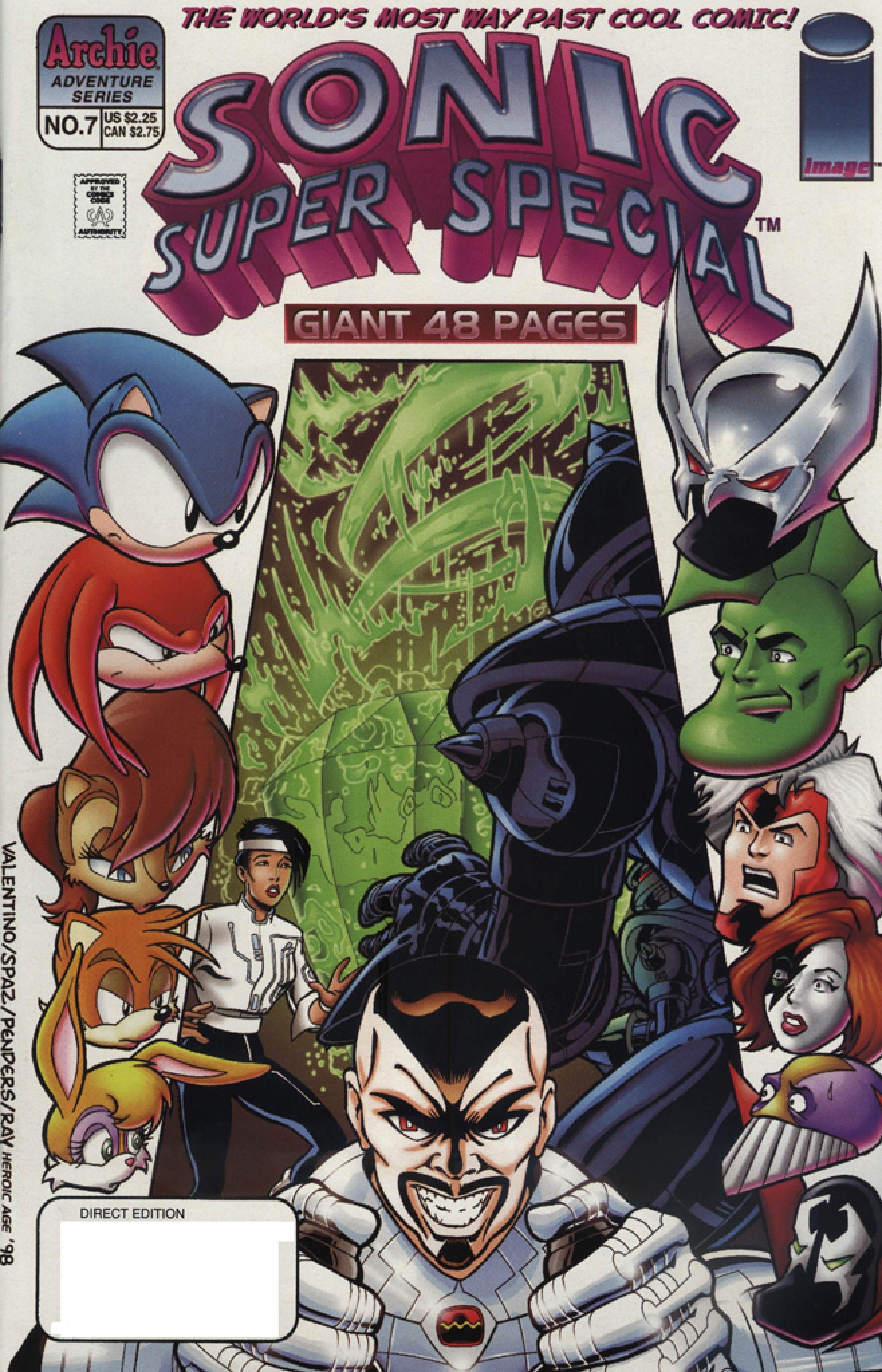

THE WORLD'S MOST WAY PAST COOL COMIC!
Archie
ADVENTURE SERIES
NO.7 US $2.25 CAN $2.75
SONIC SUPER SPECIAL™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
image™
GIANT 48 PAGES
VALENTINO/SPAZ/PENDERS/RAY HEROIC AGE '98
DIRECT EDITION

SONIC SUPER SPECIAL

PARALLEL PARADIGM



WRITTEN & INKED BY:
KEN PENDERS

ILLUSTRATED BY:
JIM VALENTINO

COLORED BY:
FRANK GAGLIARDO & PAT SPAZIANTE

LETTERED BY:
JEFF POWELL

FRONTISPIECE & CENTER SPREAD BY:
PAT SPAZIANTE & HARVEY MERCADOOCASIO

COVER SEPARATION BY:
HEROIC AGE

INTERIOR SEPARATIONS BY:
GRAPHIC COLOR WORKS

FRONTIS PIECE SEPARATIONS BY:
NELSON RIBEIRO

PIN-UP SEPARATIONS BY:
PAT SPAZIANTE

EDITED BY:
JUSTIN F. GABRIE

MANAGING EDITOR:
VICTOR GORELICK

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
RICHARD GOLDWATER

SONIC SUPER SPECIAL, No. 7, 1998. Published quarterly by Archie Comic Publications, Inc., 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543-2318. Richard H. Goldwater, President and Co-Publisher, Michael I. Silberkleit, Chairman and Co-Publisher. Single copies $2.25 in the U.S., $2.75 in Canada. POSTMASTER, send address changes to SONIC SUPER SPECIAL, c/o Archie Comic Publications, Inc., 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543-2318. Printed in Canada

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Have you ever thought about how a certain string of events brought you from Point A arrived to Point Z? Each event that occurred affecting the next like falling dominos. It was from such a "domino effect" the crossover between Sonic The Hedgehog and the heroes of Image Comics emerged.

Now, I'm no stranger to inter-company crossovers. As an assistant editor at Marvel Comics, I worked on *"Punisher/Batman: Deadly Knights"* (co-published by Marvel and DC Comics) and the unlikely crossover of "ARCHIE MEETS THE PUNISHER" (co-published by Archie Comics and Marvel). I knew, based on my experience working on these two crossovers, this project would be lots of fun, but at the same time, a tremendous amount of work for all involved.

Getting back to our domino effect, this issue begins with two brothers, Joel and Aaron Valentino, who are big fans of Sonic & Knuckles comics. As fate would have it, their father is Jim Valentino, creator of *Shadowhawk* and co-founder of Image Comics. Wanting to do something for his kids, Jim contacted Paul Castiglia (promotional director here at Archie Comics) and wondered if he could illustrate a pin-up of Sonic. He had so much fun drawing that pin-up (it printed in SONIC #60), that he was interested in penciling a Sonic story. I asked Sonic & Knuckles regular Ken Penders to collaborate with Jim on a story that could fit within Jim's busy schedule. They came back to me with a synopsis outlining this huge inter-company crossover. I quickly dusted myself off after falling out of my chair and immediately set out to help make this proposal into the reality you now hold in your hands.

Now that we're at Point Z, I'd like to thank Jim, Ken, Spaz and everyone else for all their hard work producing this book. A big "thanks" also goes out to the powers that be at Image Comics for allowing Sonic, Knuckles, and The Freedom Fighters to play in their backyard. Last, but not least, a special thanks should go to Aaron and Joel Valentino. Without their interest in our Blue Blur and Rad Red, there would be no Point A to begin with.

So sit back, relax, read on and enjoy!

Catch you on the flip side!

Justin
Freddy
Gabrie

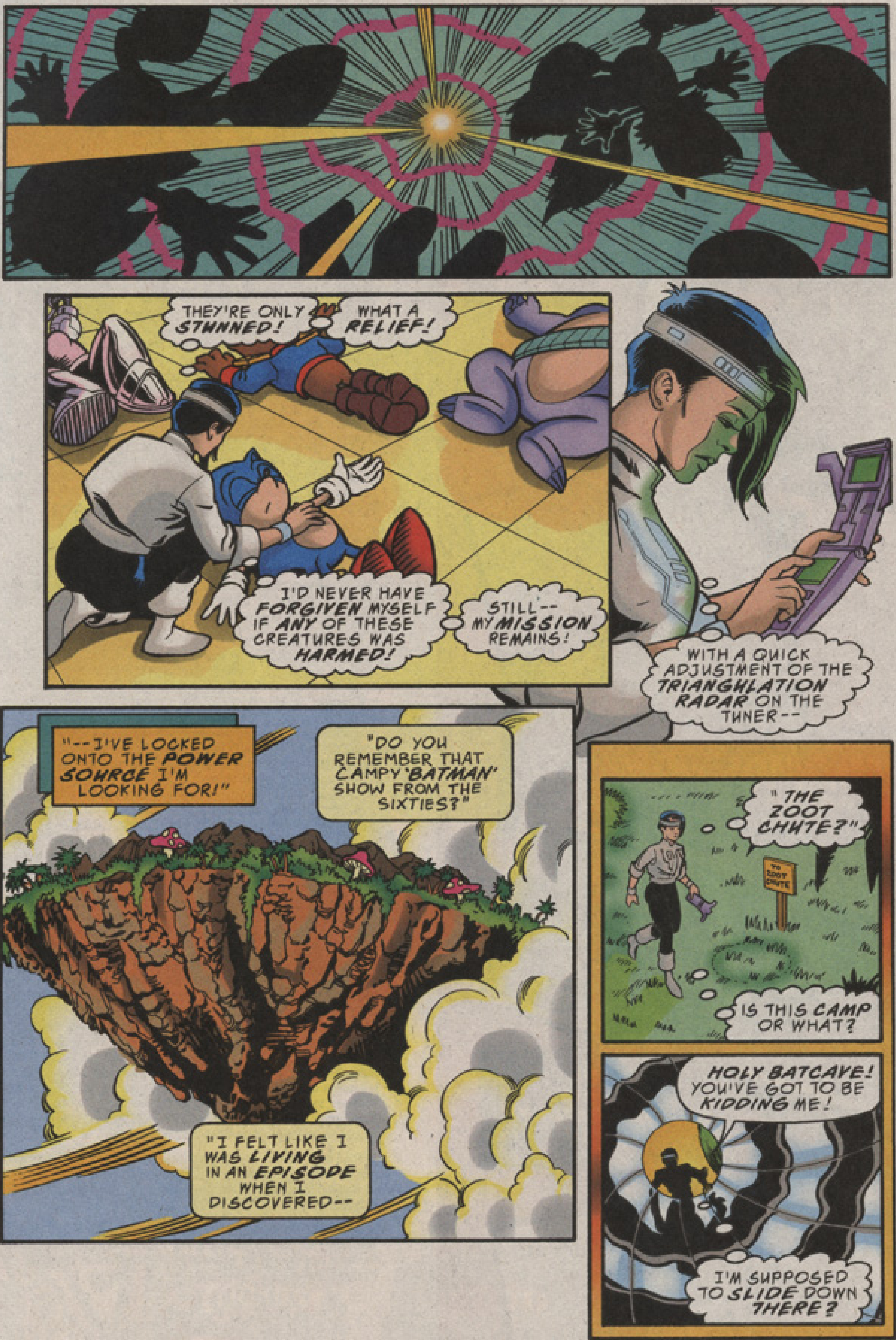



PARTICLE
MY NAME IS PARTICLE.
AND YOU CLAIM THIS DEVICE--
THE VIBRATIONAL TUNER.
--THIS TUNER TRANSPORTED YOU TO AN ALIEN WORLD?
FBI HEADQUARTERS WASHINGTON, DC 11:21 PM
"THE TUNER DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY."
"BUT YOU SAID THE PLACE YOU VISITED LOOKED FUTURISTIC?"
"COULD YOU HAVE MOVED FORWARD IN TIME?"
"POSSIBLY--
"--BUT I CAN'T SEE HOW.
RRRA...OOM
"THE TUNER WAS DESIGNED TO PROVE THE THEORY OF ALTERNATE REALITIES--"

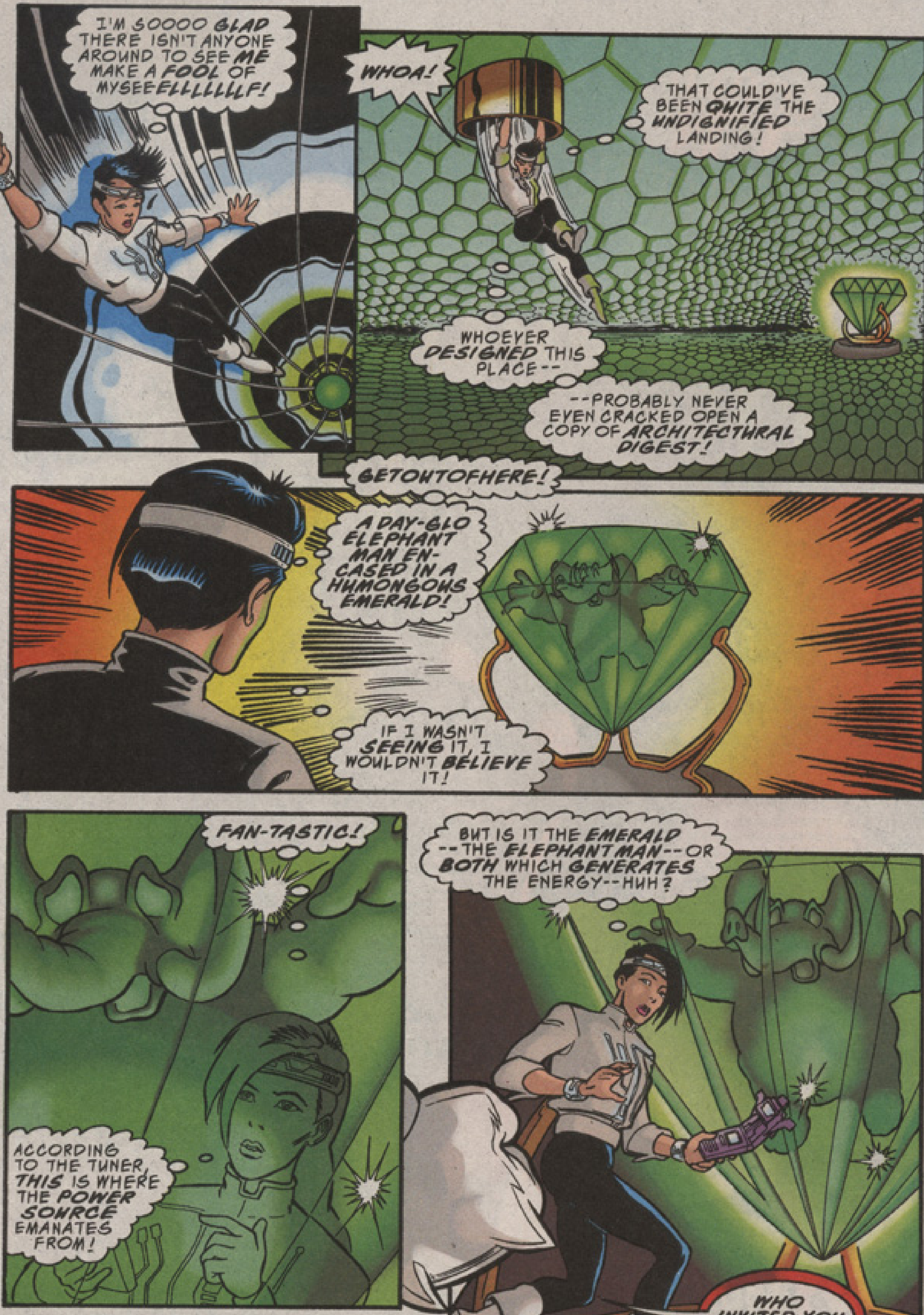

"--WORLDS THAT EXIST WITHIN THE SAME SPACE/TIME BUT ON DIFFERENT DIMENSIONAL PLANES--
"--SEPARATED ONLY BY THE FREQUENCY AT WHICH THEY VIBRATE.
"I HAD BEEN PREPARED TO ENCOUNTER A WORLD MUCH LIKE OURS WITH SOME VARIATIONS--
"--BUT NOTHING COULD HAVE PREPARED ME FOR WHAT I ACTUALLY ENCOUNTERED!"
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG OVER THERE!
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S OFF THE BEATEN PATH, TAILS--
--AND IT'S AN OVERLANDER, NO LESS!

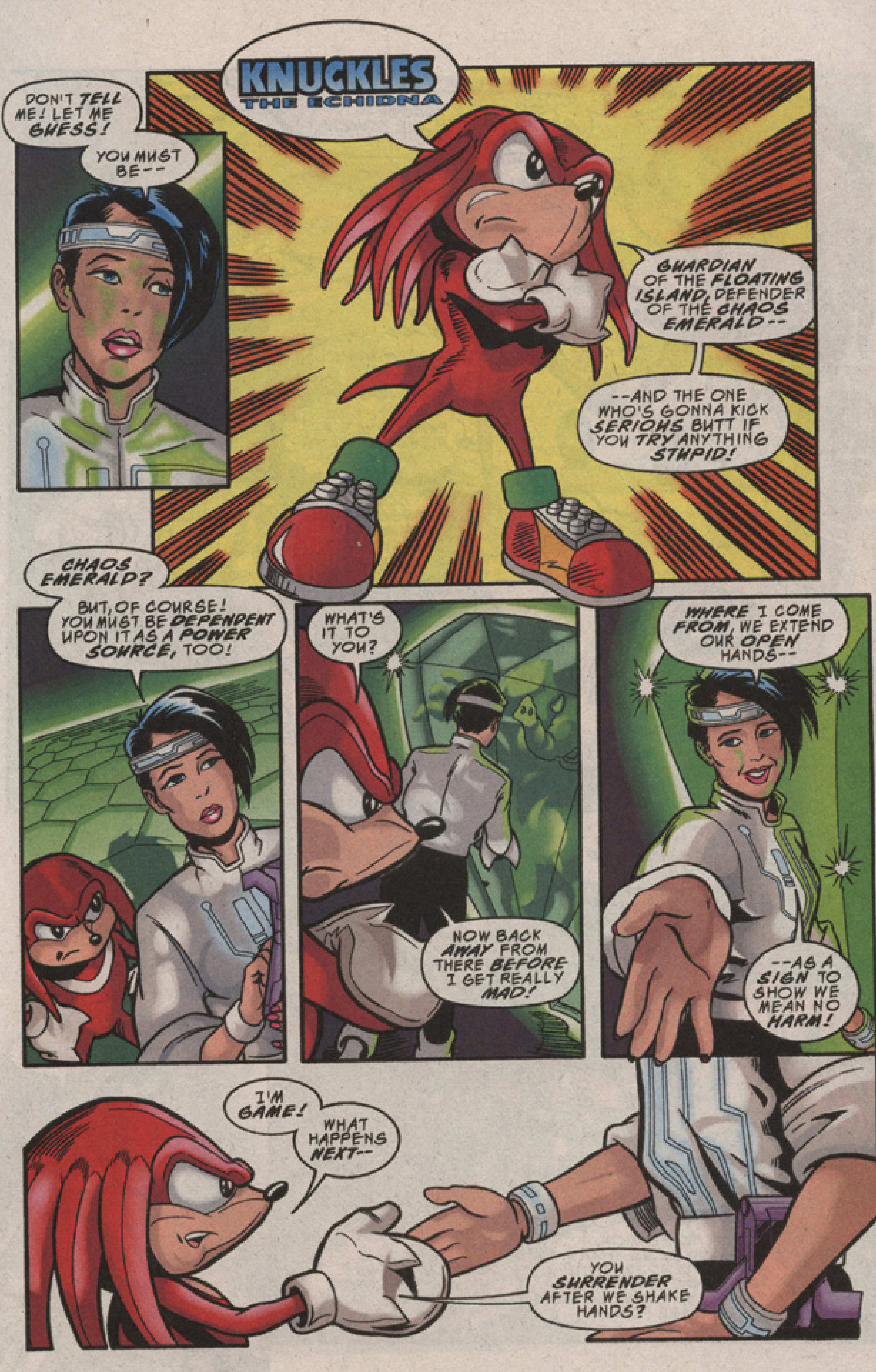

WHERE ON EARTH AM I?
WHATEVER THIS PLACE IS, IT'S SURE NOT KANSAS!
NOT ONLY THAT--


WHAT DO YOU THINK, GUYS?
SHOULD WE RUSH HER?
--BUT THE ENERGY READINGS I TRACKED ORIGINATE FROM ANOTHER LOCALE!
SHE'S AN OVER-LANDER, MON AMI!
NOT ONLY ZAT, SHE'S A FEMALE--
ONE PART OOH-LA-LA AND TWO PARTS TREACHERY!
ANTOINE!
IS THAT HOW YOU THINK OF ME?
AU CONTRAIRE, MON CHERIE!
I WAS MERELY RECALLING A BAD EXPERIENCE I ONCE HAD!*
OH MY--!
THE ANIMAL LIFE ON THIS WORLD HAS MUTATED IN SOME BIZARRE WAY!
*An UNTOLD story you'll have to remind us to tell you sometime. -- Justin
WELL, I DON'T WANT TO HURT THEM, SO--
WAIT!
WHAT IS SHE DOING?!
SHE'S FIRING SOME WEAPON, SALLY!
SCATTER!



THEY'RE ONLY STUNNED!
WHAT A RELIEF!
I'D NEVER HAVE FORGIVEN MYSELF IF ANY OF THESE CREATURES WAS HARMED!
STILL-- MY MISSION REMAINS!
WITH A QUICK ADJUSTMENT OF THE TRIANGULATION RADAR ON THE TUNER--
"--I'VE LOCKED ONTO THE POWER SOURCE I'M LOOKING FOR!"
"DO YOU REMEMBER THAT CAMPY 'BATMAN' SHOW FROM THE SIXTIES?"
"I FELT LIKE I WAS LIVING IN AN EPISODE WHEN I DISCOVERED--
"THE ZOOT CHUTE?"
TO ZOOT CHUTE
IS THIS CAMP OR WHAT?
HOLY BATCAVE! YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!
I'M SUPPOSED TO SLIDE DOWN THERE?


I'M SOOOO GLAD THERE ISN'T ANYONE AROUND TO SEE ME MAKE A FOOL OF MYSEEELLLLLLLF!
WHOA!
THAT COULD'VE BEEN QUITE THE UNDIGNIFIED LANDING!
WHOEVER DESIGNED THIS PLACE--
--PROBABLY NEVER EVEN CRACKED OPEN A COPY OF ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST!
GETOUTOFHERE!
A DAY-GLO ELEPHANT MAN EN-CASED IN A HUMONGOUS EMERALD!
IF I WASN'T SEEING IT, I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT!
FAN-TASTIC!
ACCORDING TO THE TUNER, THIS IS WHERE THE POWER SOURCE EMANATES FROM!
BUT IS IT THE EMERALD --THE ELEPHANT MAN--OR BOTH WHICH GENERATES THE ENERGY--HUH?
WHO INVITED YOU HERE?!



DON'T TELL ME! LET ME GUESS!
YOU MUST BE--
KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA
GUARDIAN OF THE FLOATING ISLAND, DEFENDER OF THE CHAOS EMERALD--
--AND THE ONE WHO'S GONNA KICK SERIOUS BUTT IF YOU TRY ANYTHING STUPID!
CHAOS EMERALD?
BUT, OF COURSE! YOU MUST BE DEPENDENT UPON IT AS A POWER SOURCE, TOO!
WHAT'S IT TO YOU?
NOW BACK AWAY FROM THERE BEFORE I GET REALLY MAD!
WHERE I COME FROM, WE EXTEND OUR OPEN HANDS--
--AS A SIGN TO SHOW WE MEAN NO HARM!
I'M GAME!
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT--
YOU SURRENDER AFTER WE SHAKE HANDS?


NOT QUITE!
YOU SIMPLY BECOME RELAXED WITH THE TOUCH OF MY HAND!
HEY!
WH-- WHA--
SOMETHING'S WRONG!
I'VE YET TO EXPERIENCE A REACTION LIKE THIS ONE'S!
COULD HE POSSIBLY BE A MUTANT SUCH AS I?
I'M TRULY SORRY, MY FRIEND!
I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO RESORT TO SUCH DESPERATE MEASURES--
--BUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE BEYOND MY CONTROL!
NOT TO MENTION, I'VE NOW LESS THAN A MINUTE TO ADJUST THE TUNER SO I CAN TRANSPORT THE POWER SOURCE I CAME FOR!
I'LL LET THE DOCTOR FIGURE OUT HOW IT WORKS ONCE I TURN IT OVER TO HIM!
THREE--
--TWO--
--ONE--
ACTIVATE

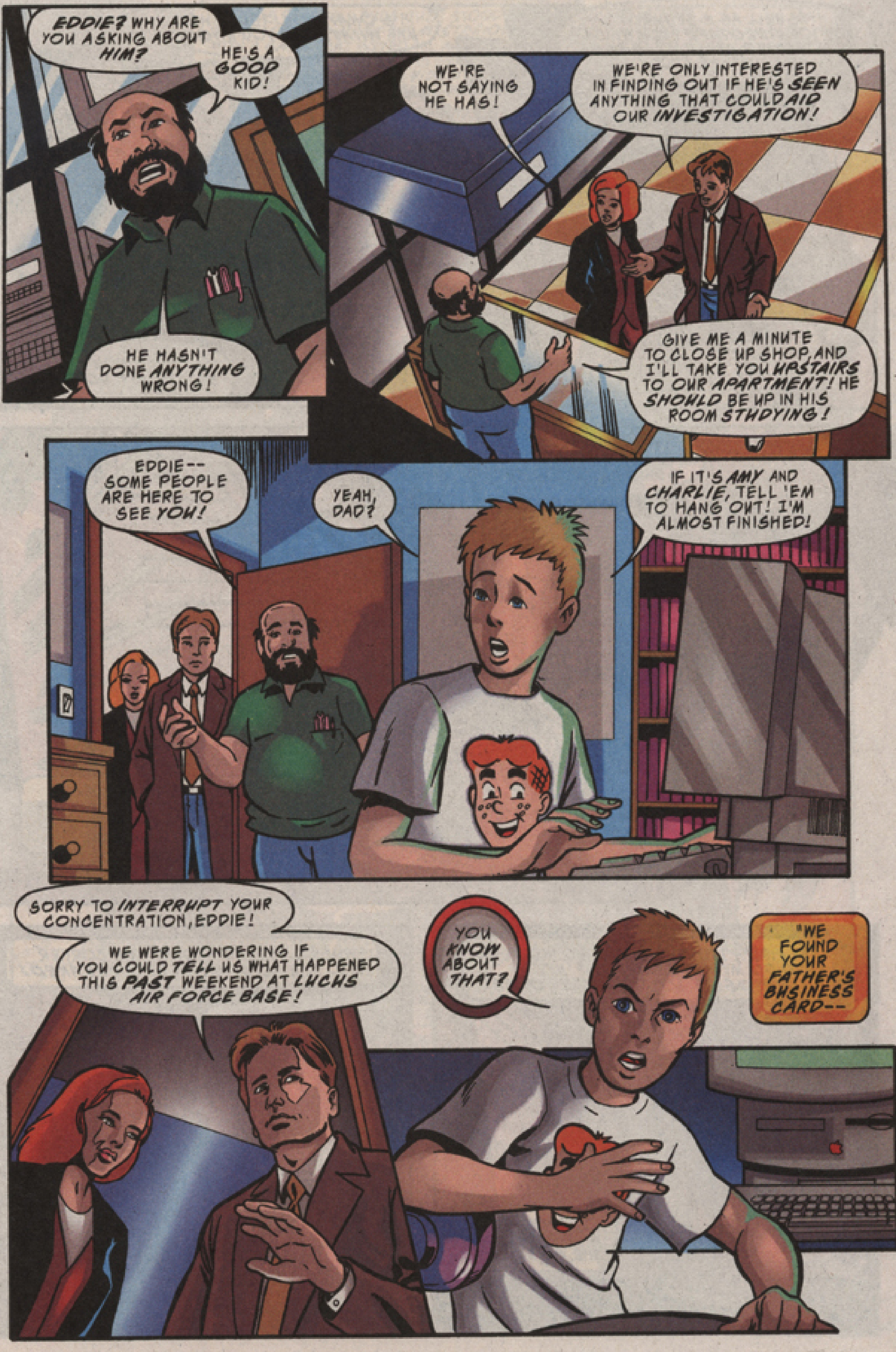

--ZERO-- ACTIVATE!
MY MISSION ACCOMPLISHED--
--I ENGAGED THE TUNER AND RETURNED TO THIS REALITY-- ALONG WITH MY UNIQUE FIND!
YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY CLUE WHAT YOU SET IN MOTION, DID YOU?
NO!
NOT AT THE TIME, I DIDN'T.
WHAT ABOUT--
EXCUSE ME, BEFORE WE CONTINUE--
--I WAS WONDERING IF I MAY AVAIL MYSELF OF THE LADIES' ROOM?
YEAH!
OVER THER--
SCOLDER!
DON'T MOVE!
DON'T EVEN TWITCH!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO SCOLDER?!

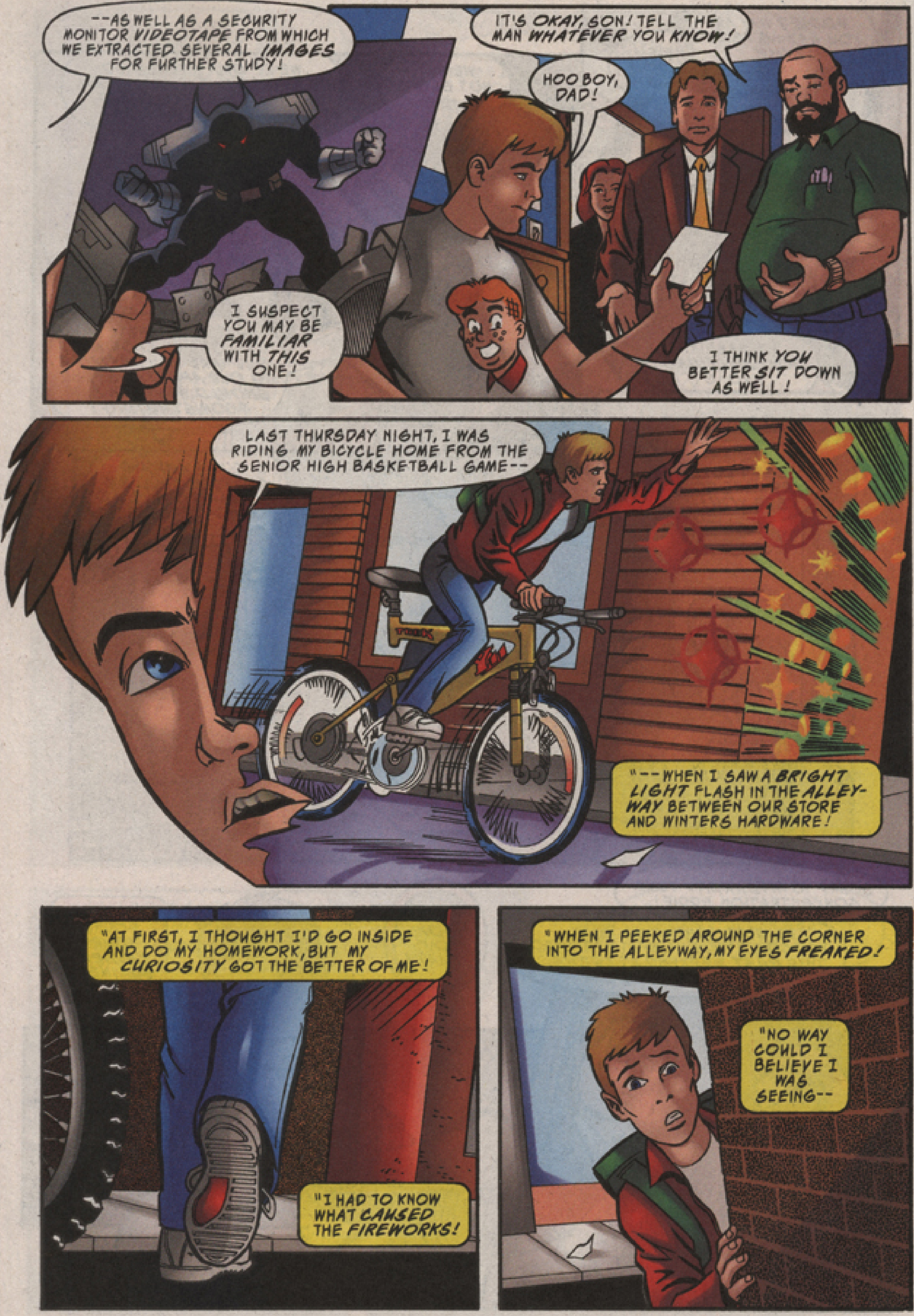


I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!
I MERELY GRABBED HOLD OF HIM SO HE WOULDN'T GET HURT FALLING!
YOU SHOULD CALL A DOCTOR!
I AM A DOCTOR!
MOVE ASIDE!
HIS HEARTBEAT'S REGULAR--
--BREATHING SEEMS NORMAL!
ALL IN ALL, HE APPEARS TO BE SIMPLY UN--CON--SCIOUSSS...
MY APOLOGIES, AGENT MULLY!
IT WOULD ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME--
--BEFORE YOUR GOVERNMENT LEARNED OF MY ABILITIES--


"--AND USE ME FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES!"
THE POWER'S OUT!
WHY IN BLAZES HASN'T THE BACK-UP GENERATORS KICKED ON?!
"SCOLDER! MULLY! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU GUYS?! WHERE'S YOUR SUSPECT?!
I HATE TO SOUND LIKE SOME WHITE HOUSE FLUNKY--
--BUT I HAVEN'T ANY RECOLLECTION!
SHE BLEW YOUR FUSE, SCOLDER--
-- JUST AS SHE PROBABLY DID TO THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM IN THE BUILDING!
YOU'RE BEGINNING TO SOUND LIKE ME, MULLY! THAT'S PRETTY--
--SPOOKY?
I EITHER GIVE YOU THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT ONCE IN A WHILE--
--OR ELSE I THINK YOU'RE NUTS!
SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
THAT WOMAN WAS OUR ONLY LEAD!
NOT QUITE!
SHE MAY HAVE BEEN THE ONLY LIVING BEING WE FOUND AMONG THE RUINS AT THAT AIR BASE--

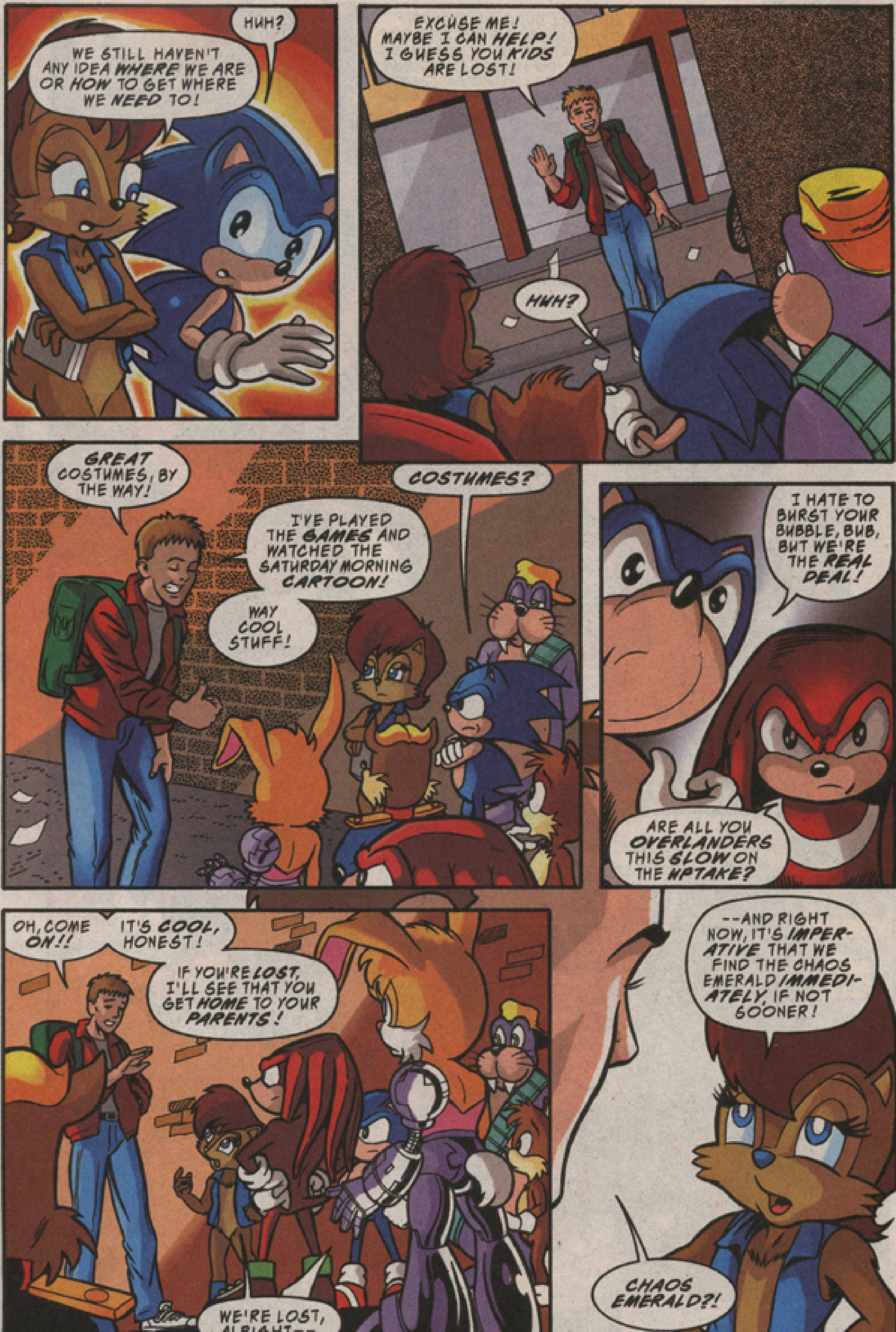

--BUT NOT THE ONLY EVIDENCE OF OTHER PLAYERS!
TV•RADIO•CD•VCR DVD•LD REPAIRS
COLLINS AND SON
ELECTRICIANS EXTRAORDINAIRE
Free Estimates
5272
-7277/Fax
COLLINS AN
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING, SCOLDER!
HOW COULD AN ELECTRONICS REPAIR-MAN LIVING IN MIDTOWN MANHATTAN WITH HIS 16-YEAR-OLD SON POSSIBLY BE INVOLVED IN THIS CASE?
MARIO'S
Collins Television Repair
Upper West 70s
New York, New York
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE TO FIND OUT!
EVENING!
HOWDY!
I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A MINUTE!
KA-KLIK!
THERE! ANOTHER SYSTEM CHECKED OUT!
NOW WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU GOOD PEOPLE?
AGENT WOLF SCOLDER! FBI! AND THIS IS MY PARTNER--
--AGENT LANA MULLY!
WE'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR WHERE-ABOUTS THIS PAST WEEKEND!
I WAS HERE THE WHOLE TIME! AS YOU CAN SEE, I'VE QUITE A BACKLOG OF WORK TO TAKE CARE OF!
WHAT ABOUT YOUR SON EDDIE?


EDDIE? WHY ARE YOU ASKING ABOUT HIM?
HE'S A GOOD KID!
HE HASN'T DONE ANYTHING WRONG!
WE'RE NOT SAYING HE HAS!
WE'RE ONLY INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT IF HE'S SEEN ANYTHING THAT COULD AID OUR INVESTIGATION!
GIVE ME A MINUTE TO CLOSE UP SHOP, AND I'LL TAKE YOU UPSTAIRS TO OUR APARTMENT! HE SHOULD BE UP IN HIS ROOM STUDYING!
EDDIE-- SOME PEOPLE ARE HERE TO SEE YOU!
YEAH, DAD?
IF IT'S AMY AND CHARLIE, TELL 'EM TO HANG OUT! I'M ALMOST FINISHED!
SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR CONCENTRATION, EDDIE!
WE WERE WONDERING IF YOU COULD TELL US WHAT HAPPENED THIS PAST WEEKEND AT LUCUS AIR FORCE BASE!
YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT?
"WE FOUND YOUR FATHER'S BUSINESS CARD--

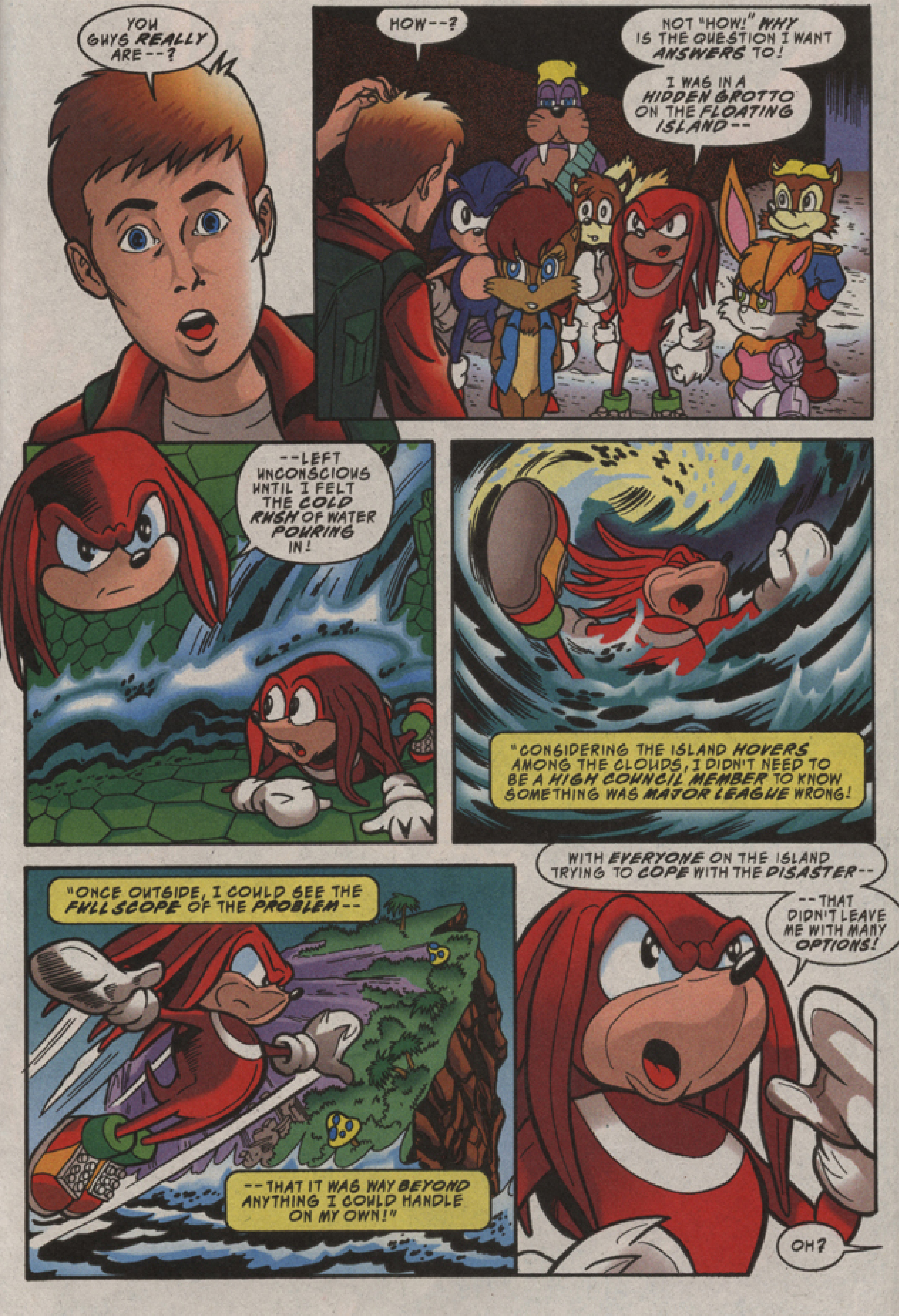


--AS WELL AS A SECURITY MONITOR VIDEOTAPE FROM WHICH WE EXTRACTED SEVERAL IMAGES FOR FURTHER STUDY!
I SUSPECT YOU MAY BE FAMILIAR WITH THIS ONE!
IT'S OKAY, SON! TELL THE MAN WHATEVER YOU KNOW!
HOO BOY, DAD!
I THINK YOU BETTER SIT DOWN AS WELL!
LAST THURSDAY NIGHT, I WAS RIDING MY BICYCLE HOME FROM THE SENIOR HIGH BASKETBALL GAME--
"--WHEN I SAW A BRIGHT LIGHT FLASH IN THE ALLEY-WAY BETWEEN OUR STORE AND WINTERS HARDWARE!
"AT FIRST, I THOUGHT I'D GO INSIDE AND DO MY HOMEWORK, BUT MY CURIOSITY GOT THE BETTER OF ME!
"I HAD TO KNOW WHAT CAUSED THE FIREWORKS!
"WHEN I PEEKED AROUND THE CORNER INTO THE ALLEYWAY, MY EYES FREAKED!
"NO WAY COULD I BELIEVE I WAS SEEING--


"--THIS REAL TALL DUDE JUST STOOD THERE LOOKING DARK AND MYSTERIOUS WITH A CAPE THAT MOVED ALL AROUND AS IF IT WERE ALIVE, AND HE WAS SURROUNDED BY KIDS DRESSED UP LIKE VIDEO GAME CHARACTERS! THEN I REMEMBERED--
"OH, YEAH!
"FORGOT IT'S HALLOWEEN!
"AT LEAST SOMEONE AROUND HERE KNOWS HOW TO HAVE FUN!"
SAY THERE, TALL-DARK-AND-GRUESOME--
DO YOU HAVE THE SLIGHTEST CLUE WHERE WE ARE?
WE DON'T NEED A ROAD MAP JUST A SIGNPOST!
NO.
OF ALL THE--!
THE NATIVES SURE ARE FRIENDLY AROUND HERE!
NOW WHAT?



WE STILL HAVEN'T ANY IDEA WHERE WE ARE OR HOW TO GET WHERE WE NEED TO!
HUH?
EXCUSE ME! MAYBE I CAN HELP! I GUESS YOU KIDS ARE LOST!
HUH?
GREAT COSTUMES, BY THE WAY!
I'VE PLAYED THE GAMES AND WATCHED THE SATURDAY MORNING CARTOON!
WAY COOL STUFF!
COSTUMES?
I HATE TO BURST YOUR BUBBLE, BUB, BUT WE'RE THE REAL DEAL!
ARE ALL YOU OVERLANDERS THIS SLOW ON THE UPTAKE?
OH, COME ON!!
IT'S COOL, HONEST!
IF YOU'RE LOST, I'LL SEE THAT YOU GET HOME TO YOUR PARENTS!
WE'RE LOST, ALRIGHT--
--AND RIGHT NOW, IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT WE FIND THE CHAOS EMERALD IMMEDIATELY, IF NOT SOONER!
CHAOS EMERALD?!


YOU GUYS REALLY ARE--?
HOW--?
NOT "HOW!" WHY IS THE QUESTION I WANT ANSWERS TO!
I WAS IN A HIDDEN GROTTO ON THE FLOATING ISLAND--
--LEFT UNCONSCIOUS UNTIL I FELT THE COLD RUSH OF WATER POURING IN!
"CONSIDERING THE ISLAND HOVERS AMONG THE CLOUDS, I DIDN'T NEED TO BE A HIGH COUNCIL MEMBER TO KNOW SOMETHING WAS MAJOR LEAGUE WRONG!
"ONCE OUTSIDE, I COULD SEE THE FULL SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM--
--THAT IT WAS WAY BEYOND ANYTHING I COULD HANDLE ON MY OWN!"
WITH EVERYONE ON THE ISLAND TRYING TO COPE WITH THE DISASTER--
--THAT DIDN'T LEAVE ME WITH MANY OPTIONS!
OH?





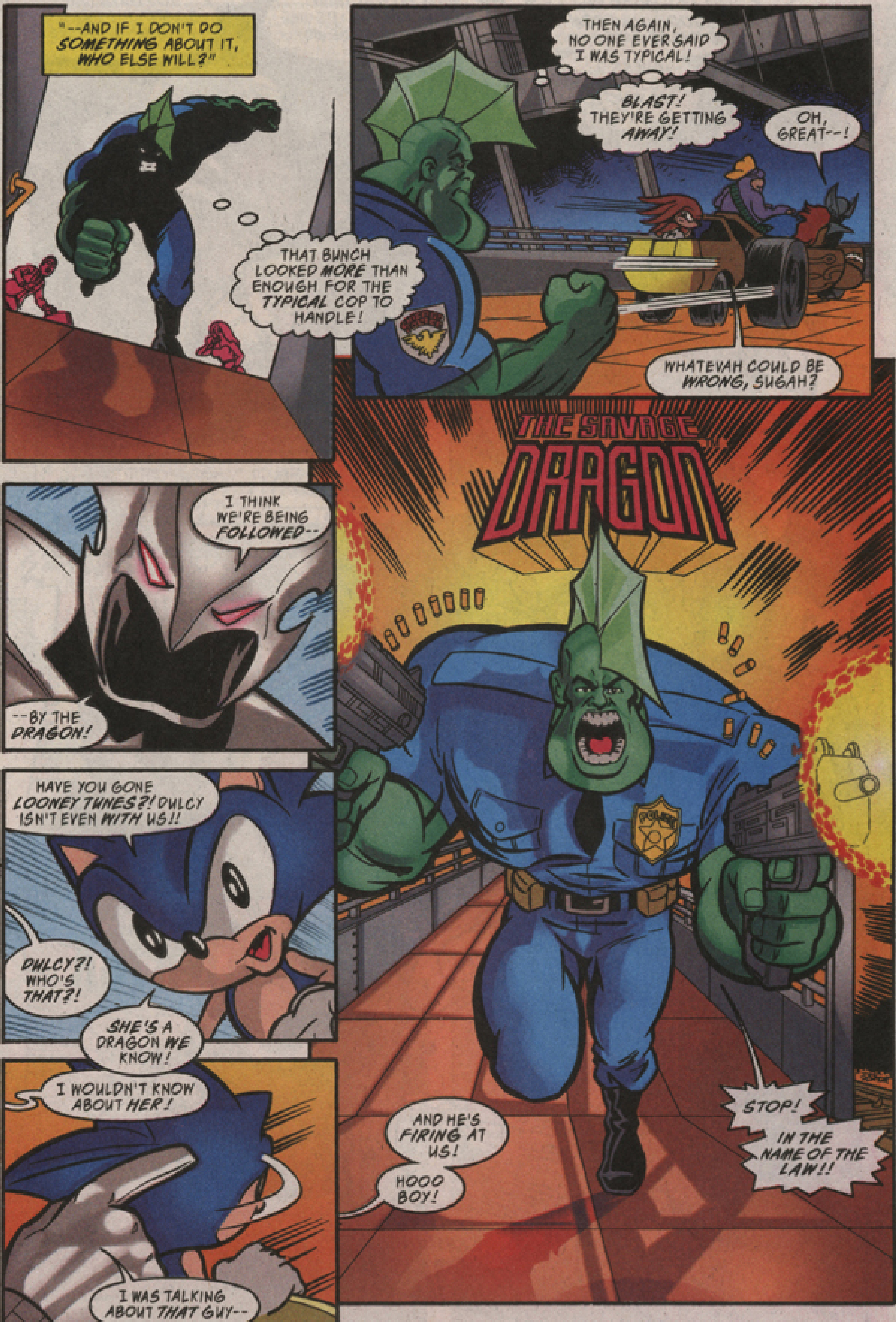

STILL HATE ADMITTING WHEN YOU NEED A HELPING HAND, KNUCKLES?
SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE!
NICOLE--
BEGIN PLAYBACK COMMENCING WITH THE ARRIVAL OF KNUCKLES!
FOCUS ON THE KEY POINTS ONLY!
VERY WELL, SALLY! TWENTY MINUTES AFTER OUR ENCOUNTER WITH THE UNKNOWN FEMALE, KNUCKLES ARRIVED!
"UPON COMPARING NOTES, IT HAD BEEN DEDUCED SHE ORIGINATED FROM SOME OTHER LOCATION...
IF THE CHAOS EMERALD WERE HERE ON MOBIUS, I'D KNOW IT!
MAYBE NICOLE COULD PICK UP A TRACE THAT YOU COULDN'T!
SCANNING...
WELL?
MY SENSORS RECORD NO SIGN OF ENERGY WAVES NORMALLY EMANATING FROM THE CHAOS EMERALD ANYWHERE HERE ON MOBIUS!
SWELL!
"CONFIRMING KNUCKLES' WORST FEARS, IMMEDIATE PREPARATIONS WERE BEGUN IN REGARDS TO RETRIEVING THE FLOATING ISLAND'S ONLY CHANCE FOR SURVIVAL...
DIG THE SET OF WHEELS!
WAS THIS ONE OF ROBOTNIK'S --OR WHAT?!*
ROTOR FOUND IT ABANDONED MONTHS AGO!
I'VE YET TO FIND ANY INDICATIONS AS TO ITS ORIGINS!
ALL I KNOW IS THAT IT'S A BEAUTY--
*Knuckles is referring to Dr. IVO ROBOTNIK, who fought his FINAL battle against Sonic in the now classic SONIC #50, recently restored to its full originally-intended length in SONIC SUPER SPECIAL #6


--AND IT WORKS!
EVERYONE ALL SET? THEN FULL SPEED AHEAD!
NEXT STOP--
--THE COSMIC INTERSTATE!
"THE COSMIC WHAAAT?!"
"THE COSMIC INTERSTATE--A LONG AND WINDING ROAD THAT TAKES YOU HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE! WE USE IT AS A PATHWAY TO OTHER WORLDS--OTHER ZONES--OTHER DIMENSIONS!"
I'M PICKING UP STRONG CHAOS ENERGY READINGS, SALLY!
HAVE YOU PINPOINTED THE LOCATION, NICOLE?
WE DON'T WANT TO OVERSHOOT OUR MARK!
OVER THERE, SALLY!
THAT PLANET!
ONCE I LOCKED ONTO THE SIGNAL--
--I FOLLOWED IT DOWN TO HERE!
WHAT NICOLE IS SAYING--


--IS THAT THE MASTER CHAOS EMERALD IS SOMEWHERE IN THE VICINITY--
--AND TIME IS DEFINITELY NOT ON OUR SIDE!
WILL YOU HELP US?
"I TAKE IT THAT'S A YES?"
I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE GETTING INTO--
--BUT IF YOU NEED HELP, EDDIE...
DON'T WORRY, DAD!
I KNOW WHO TO CALL IN A JAM!
AS THE LADY SAID, THE CLOCK IS TICKING!
IT'S TIME FOR--
SHADOWHAWK™
--TO HIT THE STREETS AGAIN!
READY, GUYS?
MONAMIS! IT'S A SWATBOT!


COOL YOUR JETS, ANTOINE!
IT'S THE KID!
LET'S NOT BROADCAST THAT, ALL RIGHT!
ONLY MY DAD KNOWS!
RIGHT NOW, WE HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW THE BUNCH OF US ARE GOING TO TRACK DOWN YOUR EMERALD!
ANY IDEAS?
"THE ANSWER WAS JUST AROUND THE CORNER, WHERE THEIR VEHICLE WAS PARKED. IT WAS THE FUNKIEST THING I EVER LAID EYES ON!
WOO HOO!
MOVE OVER, ROBBIE KNIEVAL!
PICKING UP THE CHAOS EMERALD YET, NICOLE?
AFFIRMATIVE, SALLY!
UTILIZING THE ELECTRONIC MAP GRID I'M PICKING UP VIA SATELLITE TRANSMISSION, I CAN DISPLAY THE LOCATIONS OF OURSELVES IN RELATION TO THE CHAOS EMERALD--
--AND CONTINUOUSLY TRANSMIT THE DATA TO THE ONBOARD NAVIGATIONAL COMPUTER!
TRANSLATION?


THE COMPUTER IS STEERING THE BUGGY, PROGRAMMED BY NICOLE!
BETTER SLOW UP, GUYS!
THAT'S GRAND CENTRAL STATION YOU'RE HEADING TOWARDS!
"I CAN'T EXPLAIN HOW, BUT WE PHASED RIGHT THROUGH A WALL OF SOLID CONCRETE AND STEEL, EMERGING INSIDE THE TERMINAL!
"AT FIRST, NO ONE NOTICED! AFTER ALL, THIS WAS NEW YORK...
MOM! DO YOU SEE WHO IT IS?!!
IT'S ABOUT TIME WE ACTUALLY CAN GET AWAY FROM IT ALL, OHMEN!
DID YOU KNOCK ON WOOD YET, JILL?
"IT ONLY TOOK SECONDS FOR THE SPECTATORS TO COMPREHEND SOMETHING UNUSUAL WAS OCCURRING AMONG THEM...
WHAT THE DEVIL--?!
OHMEN, YOU'RE NOT--!
SORRY, JILL! SOMEONE COULD GET HURT!


"--AND IF I DON'T DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, WHO ELSE WILL?"
THAT BUNCH LOOKED MORE THAN ENOUGH FOR THE TYPICAL COP TO HANDLE!
THEN AGAIN, NO ONE EVER SAID I WAS TYPICAL!
BLAST! THEY'RE GETTING AWAY!
OH, GREAT--!
WHATEVAH COULD BE WRONG, SUGAH?
THE SAVAGE DRAGON
I THINK WE'RE BEING FOLLOWED--
--BY THE DRAGON!
HAVE YOU GONE LOONEY TUNES?! DULCY ISN'T EVEN WITH US!!
DULCY?! WHO'S THAT?!
SHE'S A DRAGON WE KNOW!
I WOULDN'T KNOW ABOUT HER!
I WAS TALKING ABOUT THAT GUY--
AND HE'S FIRING AT US!
HOOO BOY!
STOP!
IN THE NAME OF THE LAW!!


HE SURE PLAYS FOR KEEPS, DOESN'T HE?
IT'S SO HARD TO TELL THE GOOD GUYS FROM THE BAD THESE DAYS!
GUESS I HAVE TO REMIND HIM WHO'S WHO!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? IT'S THE END OF THE LINE ANYWAY!
YOU GUYS CAN'T BOARD THE TRAIN IF MY FRIEND IS FIRING AT US!
YOU KNOW THIS NUTBALL?!
YEAH! WE'VE MET!
"Check out ALTERED IMAGES #1-3 - Justin
WHY DO I FEEL IT TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE!
YOU HEARD NICOLE, EVERYONE--
MAY I REMIND YOU THE CHAOS EMERALD IS LEAVING ON THAT DEPARTING TRAIN?
"--ALL ABOARD!"
HAVE YOU LOST IT, DRAGON?!
YOU COULD'VE KILLED US!!!
WOULDN'T YOU SHOOT FIRST AND ASK QUESTIONS LATER--
--IF YOU SAW A BUNCH OF HOOLIGANS TEAR--THROUGH--
GET BACK! THAT CYCLE'S ALIVE!!
WHOA!
THAT THING'S GOT MORE GIMMICKS THAN JAMES BOND!
WHRRR KLIK-KLIK-KLIK
ALLOW ME TO BE OF ASSISTANCE!


HUH? GUESS IT'S TRUE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT NEW YORK!
CAN'T WALK AROUND WITHOUT STUMBLING INTO YOU SUPER-TYPES!
PARDON MY OBSERVATION, BUT HAVE YOU LOOKED IN THE MIRROR LATELY?
BY THE WAY, THE NAME IS--
UNION
I'VE SEEN YOU! I'M SHADOWHAWK! AND IT'S A--
NEVER MIND THAT! WE'VE GOT TO GO AFTER THAT BUNCH!
WE STAND MORE OF A CHANCE FOLLOWING THE TRAIN THROUGH THE AIR THAN ON FOOT--
--THOUGH I'M MORE CURIOUS AS TO THE URGENCY TO PURSUE CHILDREN DRESSED AS CARTOON CHARACTERS!
LOOK AT ME! I'M FLYING!!
THIS IS SOOOOO COOL!
LEMME DOWN, YA BIG DOOFUS! THIS DRAGON DOESN'T FLY!
AS FOR THOSE KIDS--
"--JUST BECAUSE THEY MAY BE KIDS DOESN'T MAKE THEM ANY LESS DANGEROUS!"
ACCORDING TO MY SENSORS--
--THE CHAOS EMERALD IS SOMEWHERE AHEAD IN THIS CAR!
BE READY FOR ANYTHING, SAL!
AH, THERE YOU ARE!


IT TOOK YOU A BIT LONGER THAN I EXPECTED, BUT I KNEW YOU'D COME AFTER THIS LITTLE BAUBLE REGARDLESS!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "YOU KNEW?" AM I MISSING SOMETHING HERE?
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE IN THE DARK, LADY!
HOW WOULD SOMEONE LIKE YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE MASTER CHAOS EMERALD?
THAT WOULD BE TELLING! SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT I KNOW YOU ALL QUITE WELL!
REALLY? I DON'T EVER RECALL EVER STUMBLING OVER YOU EITHER, BUB!
YOU GET TO KNOW ME VERY WELL, ECHIDNA--BUT THAT'S IN THE FUTURE!
AS FOR YOU HEDGEHOG,--YOU MERELY LUCKED OUT IN OUR PAST ENCOUNTER!
THIS TIME, HOWEVER, I'M MORE IN CONTROL THAN ANYONE DARES IMAGINE!
WHEN YOU LEARN--
SKKRAAAP
AH! THERE THEY ARE! INTERESTING SET-UP, TO SAY THE LEAST!
WHO APPOINTED YOU SET DESIGNER?
BRING HIM DOWN, MY MANDROIDS!


--DEAD OR ALIVE MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ME!
TWO CAN PLAY AT THAT GAME, BASE VILLIAN!
FZASH
YOU CAN'T SCARE ME, YOU COSTUMED CRETIN!
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT!
"YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE LIGHTSHOW! EVEN THE FOURTH OF JULY COULDN'T BEGIN TO COMPARE!
"ON THE OTHER HAND, THE CAR WE WERE IN COULD'VE USED SOME SERIOUS SHOCK ABSORBERS...
GRAB HOLD, EVERYONE!
SAL!
"AS EVERYTHING SPUN OUT OF CONTROL, I BEGAN LOSING IT AROUND THAT POINT...
"WE COULD'VE ENDED UP ANYWHERE--ANOTHER TIME, EVEN ANOTHER PLANET--FOR ALL I WAS AWARE!"


SWATBOT-ONE-TO-SQUADRON--
I'VE-LOCKED-ONTO-THE-MASTER'S-SIGNAL!
SENSORS-INDICATE-THE-MASTER-IS-BELOW-US--
--ALONG-WITH-VARIOUS-ALIEN-LIFEFORMS!
RIGHT ON SCHEDULE! ISAAC! GET YOUR TEAM IN HERE IMMEDIATELY--
--FOR THERE IS MUCH TO BE DONE!
AS-YOU-COMMAND-MASTER!
PHASE ONE IS NOW COMPLETE!
I HAVE GATHERED TOGETHER THE UNWITTING COMPONENTS FOR THE MOST INSIDIOUS PLOT EVER DEVISED--
--AND WITH THE INCALCULABLE ENERGY OF THIS AMAZING GEMSTONE HARNESSED UNDER MY CONTROL--
--THERE'LL SOON BE A CRISIS ON INFINITE REALITIES RESULTING IN ONLY ONE--
--MINE!
HA HA HA HA HA HA


"AS OUT OF IT AS I WAS, I COULD SENSE THINGS WERE PROGRESSING ALL AROUND ME, AND I'M SURE I WASN'T THE ONLY ONE UNHAPPY WITH WHAT WAS GOING DOWN...
I DID MY PART, DOCTOR--NOW I EXPECT YOU TO LIVE UP TO YOUR PART OF THE BARGAIN!
MY DEAR PARTICLE, I'M FAR FROM BEING FINISHED WITH YOU!
CONSIDER THE POWER YOU POSSESS--THE ABILITY TO CONTROL AND MANIPULATE ELECTRICAL IMPULSES--AND ITS AWESOME IMPLICATIONS!
INTERFACING WITH NEURONS IN THE HUMAN NERVOUS SYSTEM OR IMPULSES ALONG A CIRCUIT BOARD ARE SMALL POTATOES COMPARED TO WHAT I HAVE IN MIND FOR YOU!
I'LL FORGIVE YOUR OUTBURST THIS TIME--
--BUT I RECOMMEND AN ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT ON YOUR PART AND GET WITH THE PROGRAM!
NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME--
--I SEE OTHERS HAVE NEED OF MY WISDOM AND GUIDANCE!
WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PROBLEM, YOU ARMOR-PLATED DOLTS?



THERE-SEEMS-TO-BE-AN-UNUSUAL-SOUND-EMANATING-FROM-INSIDE, MASTER.
LISTEN.
:Sigh:
IF I MUST!
Hmmm...
YOU'RE RIGHT!
MOST UNUSUAL!
I FEEL SO BROKE UP... I WANNA GO HOOOOME...
"I CAN'T RECALL ANYTHING QUITE LIKE IT!"
ZZ-ZAAT
KA-KLIK
KERI!
I JUST ABOUT LOST HOPE OF EVER SEEING YOU AGAIN!
I NEVER DID, ANITA!
COME ON!


"WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME!"
THAT'S MUCH BETTER!
THE MAXX WANTS TO SEE THE LIGHT!
TOO DARK IN HERE!
SKA
RUUUNCH
SMAAAASH
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?
GET HIM!
WHY IS MAXX SO UNPOPULAR ALL OF A SUDDEN?
ALL I WANT IS JULIE!
"ANYONE SEE HER?"
NOW THIS ONE, ANITA!
I JUST ABOUT HAVE IT, SIS!
AND I'VE JUST ABOUT HAD IT!
OUR ENEMY IS EITHER SUPREMELY DANGEROUS--
KER-WHHAAM


--OR AWESOMELY STUPID TO THINK WE COULDN'T FREE OURSELVES FROM HIS DUNGEONS!
YOU LOOK FAMILIAR, MISS--?
VELOCITY
I GET AROUND!
I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED THAT VOICE! IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
NOT THAT LONG AGO, DRAGON!*
HEY! HOW ABOUT WE REMINISE LATER AND GET OUTTA HERE!
* Refer to VELOCITY mini-series #2 - Justin
WHOA! SOUNDS LIKE SOME SERIOUS PARTYING IS GOING ON UP THERE!
IF YOU ASK ME, IT SOUNDS LIKE ANYTHING BUT FUN UP THERE!
THUD
SONIC! LISTEN UP! SINCE YOU'RE THE FASTEST WE'LL NEED YOUR SPEED TO CREATE A DIVERSION--
--ALLOWING US TO ASSESS THE SITUATION AND DEPLOY THE TROOPS TO OUR ADVANTAGE!
SPEED? YOU SAY YOU NEED SPEED?
WHEN IT COMES TO SPEED, NO ONE HAS A LEG UP ON ME!
I HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, SISTER--
Sigh
SHE SOUNDS JUST LIKE HIM!

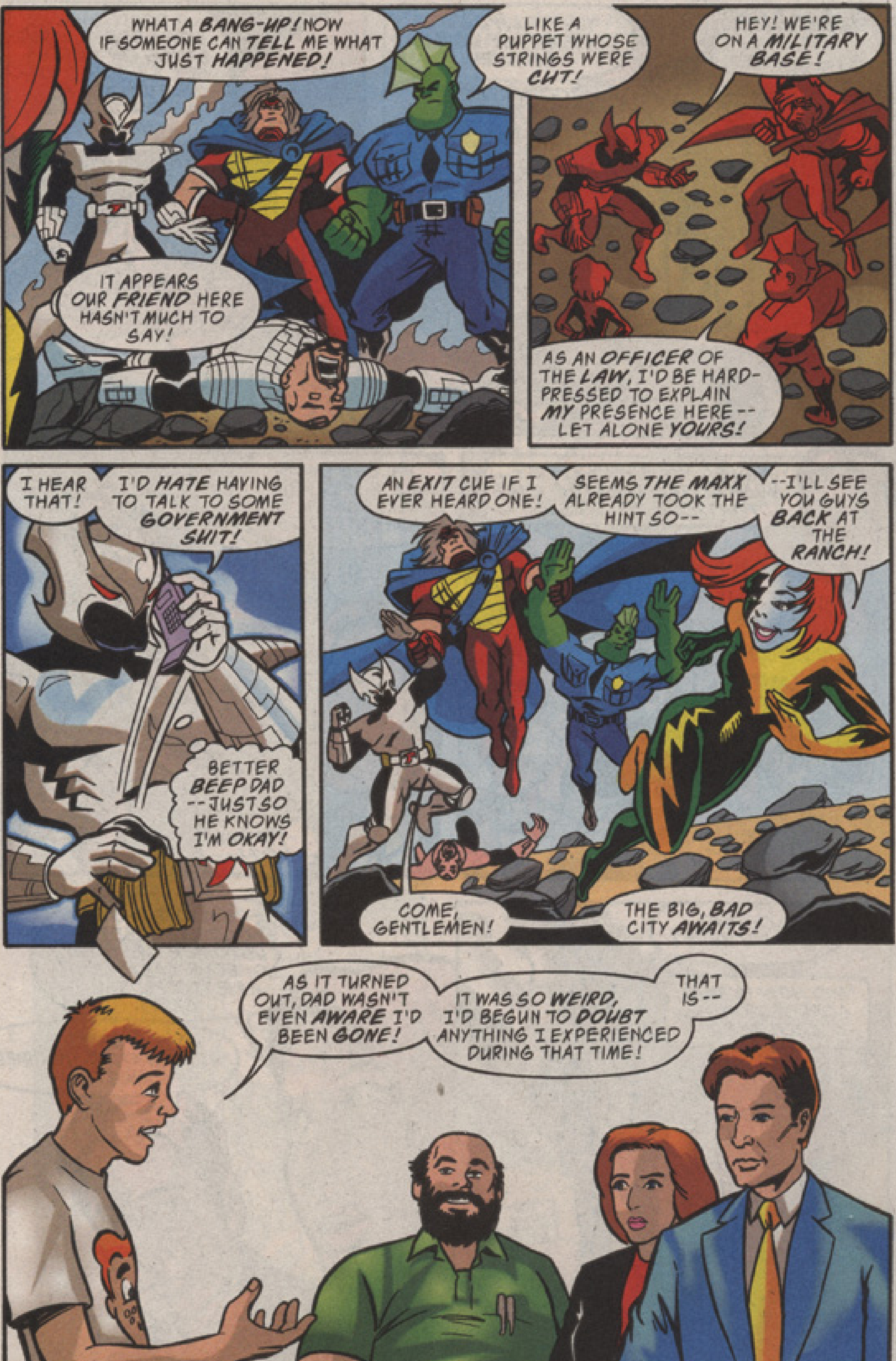

--BUT I'M JUST GETTING WARMED UP!
WELL, I'LL BE--!
JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU SAW IT ALL, eh?
STEEE-RIIIKE!
THAT BOY OUGHTA TURN PRO!
WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT?
WE NEED THAT HUNK OF ROCK IN ONE PIECE!
NOT TO MENTION THE NUTCASE THAT STOLE IT FROM US!
I'LL TAKE THIS WAY--
--AND I'LL GO THAT WAY!
--WITH NEITHER ONE OF YOU HAVING A CHANCE TO DERAIL MY PLANS IN ANY EVENT!
OBSERVE!
KAH-THOOM!
"I'VE STUDIED THE CHAOS FORCES FOR COUNTLESS YEARS ACROSS UNTOLD PERMUTATIONS OF REALITIES--
"--AND NOW, AS A RESULT OF ALL MY EFFORTS--


"--I'M GOING TO RECREATE REALITY --MY WAY!"
THIS IS WHACKO! THERE'S ONLY ONE NUT-JOB I KNOW OF CAPABLE OF THIS--
--AND HE BIT THE BIG ONE!
JUST WHO ARE YOU?!
AS MUCH AS IT KILLS ME NOT TO GLOAT, HEDGEHOG, I'M AFRAID I CAN'T TELL YOU UNTIL THE FINAL ENDGAME!
AT THE MOMENT--
"--I'M STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT IF I PREFER THE THIRTY-THIRD CENTURY POST-APOCALYPTIC STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE--
"--OVER TWENTIETH CENTURY ART DECO!
"I CAN NEVER DECIDE!"
MAYBE I COULD MAKE THE CHOICE FOR YOU, MAC!
HOW ABOUT NEITHER?
YOU!

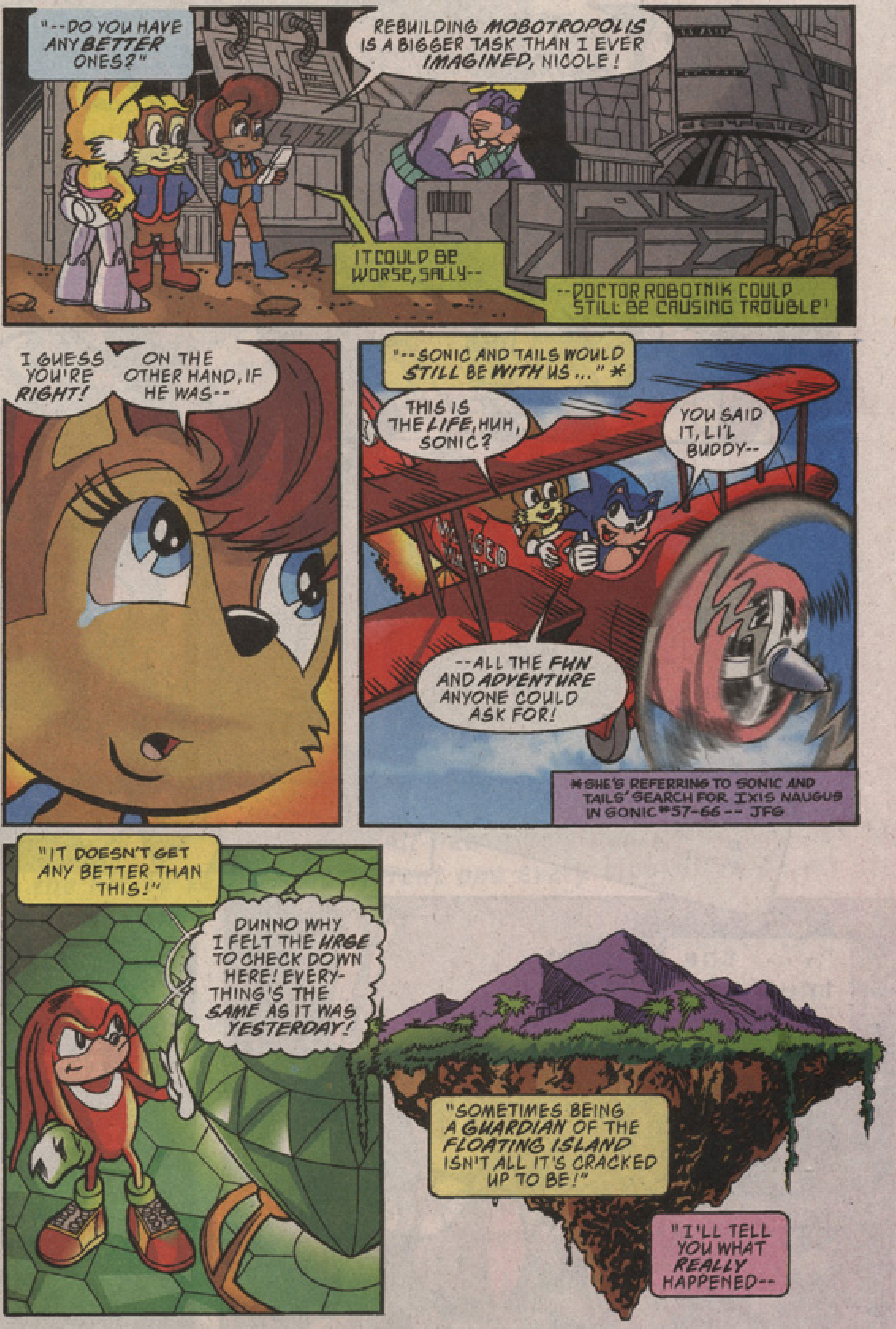


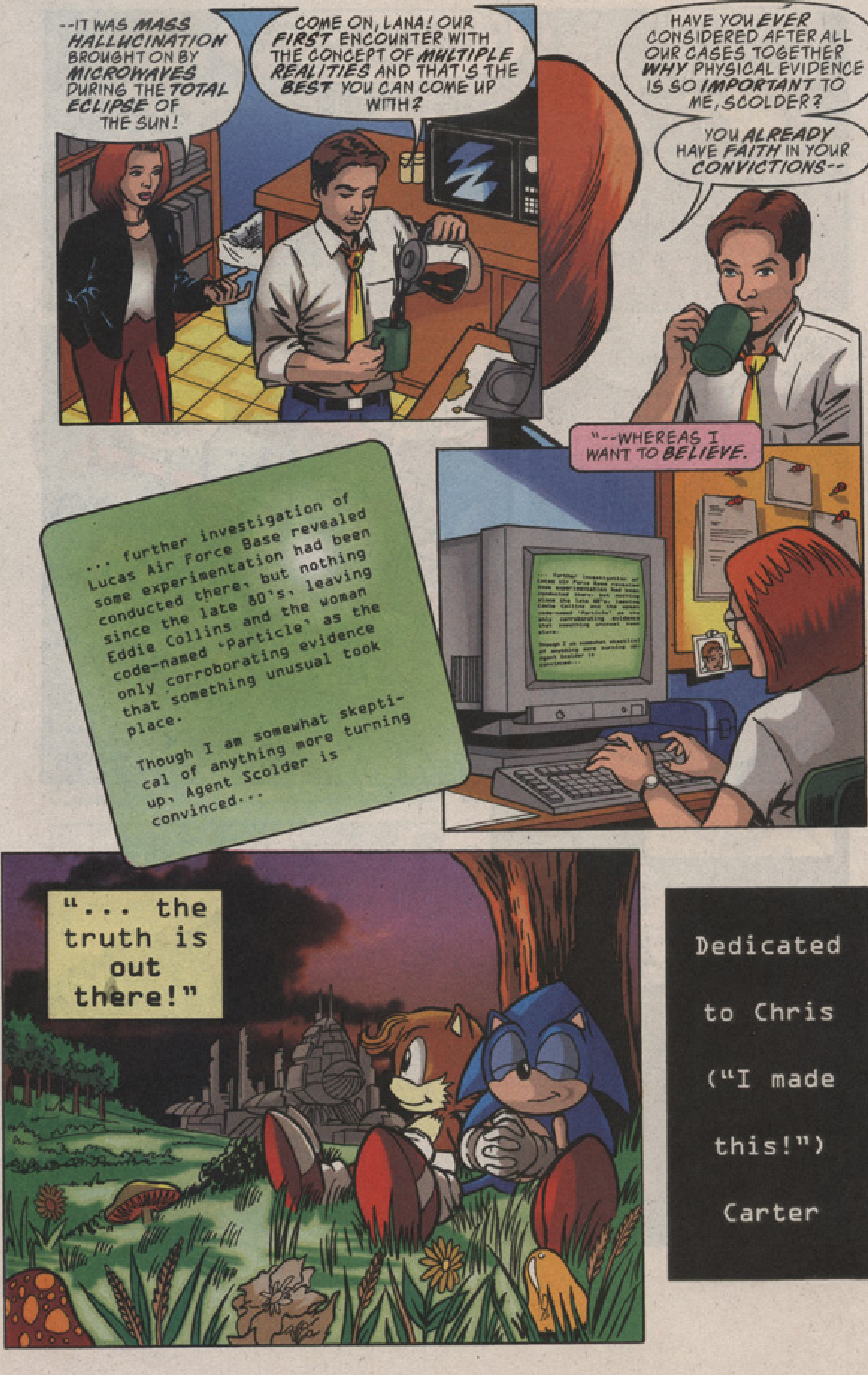
WHETHER OR NOT YOU KNOW ME DOESN'T MATTER!
WHAT DOES--
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU CYBERNETIC CLODS DO-- GRIND HIS BONES TO PASTE-- USE HIM FOR TOMORROW'S STEW--
--JUST GET RID OF THE ECHIDNA!
--IS THAT I'VE A JOB TO DO!
SMASH ANY SWATBOT BEFORE THEY CAN EVEN GET NEAR KNUCKLES!
EVERYONE!! ATTACK!!
MANOHMAN ...NOT SURE--I CAN DO THIS!
LOOK INSIDE YOURSELF, KNUCKLES!
THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE BORN FOR!
FATHER...?
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM, KNUCKLES! YOUR DESTINY IS TO RULE A UNIVERSE!
I GAVE YOU ABILITES FAR BEYOND ANY ECHIDNA, MY SON--
SETTING OUR SIGHTS A TAD HIGH, AREN'T WE, GREAT UNCLE DIMITRI?


ONLY YOU CAN MAKE THE CHOICE WHETHER TO PROPERLY USE OR SQUANDER THE GIFT I PROVIDED!
EVEN IF I DON'T UNDERSTAND--
--WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE BUT TO LISTEN TO MY FATHER?
SO MUCH POWER--
SO MUCH ENERGY--
ALL I WANT--
--IS MY WORLD--
--RESTORED TO ME!


WHAT A BANG-UP! NOW IF SOMEONE CAN TELL ME WHAT JUST HAPPENED!
LIKE A PUPPET WHOSE STRINGS WERE CUT!
IT APPEARS OUR FRIEND HERE HASN'T MUCH TO SAY!
HEY! WE'RE ON A MILITARY BASE!
AS AN OFFICER OF THE LAW, I'D BE HARD-PRESSED TO EXPLAIN MY PRESENCE HERE -- LET ALONE YOURS!
I HEAR THAT!
I'D HATE HAVING TO TALK TO SOME GOVERNMENT SUIT!
BETTER BEEP DAD -- JUST SO HE KNOWS I'M OKAY!
AN EXIT CUE IF I EVER HEARD ONE!
SEEMS THE MAXX ALREADY TOOK THE HINT SO--
--I'LL SEE YOU GUYS BACK AT THE RANCH!
COME, GENTLEMEN!
THE BIG, BAD CITY AWAITS!
AS IT TURNED OUT, DAD WASN'T EVEN AWARE I'D BEEN GONE!
THAT IS --
IT WAS SO WEIRD, I'D BEGUN TO DOUBT ANYTHING I EXPERIENCED DURING THAT TIME!


"--UNTIL YOU GUYS SHOWED UP!"
WHAT DO YOU THINK, MULLY?
THE KID LIVES IN A FANTASY WORLD, SCOLDER!
TOO MANY COMIC BOOKS AND VIDEO GAMES FOR HIS OWN GOOD!
I DON'T THINK COMIC BOOKS, VIDEO GAMES OR MUST-SEE T.V. COULD'VE COME UP WITH AS WILD A TALE AS THAT ONE!
"BESIDES, HIS STORY PRETTY MUCH CORROBORATES WHAT PARTICLE TOLD US!"
EASY, MISS.
ALL WE WANT TO DO IS ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS.
HAVE YOU SEEN MY SISTER?
UNLESS SHE'S TALL, RIPPED AND BULKED UP ON TOO MANY STEROIDS--
--I'D SAY NOT!
HELLO, WHAT HAVE WE HERE?
"AND HOW IS THAT CORROBORATING, SCOLDER?"
TOP SECRET RESEARCH FACILITY
FOR ALL WE KNOW, SHE COULD'VE BEEN A CUSTOMER OR PERHAPS SOMEONE ELSE MAY HAVE DROPPED THE CARD!
I'M OPEN TO ALTERNATIVE THEORIES, MULLY--


"--DO YOU HAVE ANY BETTER ONES?"
REBUILDING MOBOTROPOLIS IS A BIGGER TASK THAN I EVER IMAGINED, NICOLE!
IT COULD BE WORSE, SALLY--
--DOCTOR ROBOTNIK COULD STILL BE CAUSING TROUBLE!
I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT!
ON THE OTHER HAND, IF HE WAS--
"--SONIC AND TAILS WOULD STILL BE WITH US..." *
THIS IS THE LIFE, HUH, SONIC?
YOU SAID IT, LI'L BUDDY--
--ALL THE FUN AND ADVENTURE ANYONE COULD ASK FOR!
*SHE'S REFERRING TO SONIC AND TAILS' SEARCH FOR IXIS NAUGUS IN SONIC #57-66 -- JFG
"IT DOESN'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THIS!"
DUNNO WHY I FELT THE URGE TO CHECK DOWN HERE! EVERY-THING'S THE SAME AS IT WAS YESTERDAY!
"SOMETIMES BEING A GUARDIAN OF THE FLOATING ISLAND ISN'T ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE!"
"I'LL TELL YOU WHAT REALLY HAPPENED--



--IT WAS MASS HALLUCINATION BROUGHT ON BY MICROWAVES DURING THE TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN!
COME ON, LANA! OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE CONCEPT OF MULTIPLE REALITIES AND THAT'S THE BEST YOU CAN COME UP WITH?
HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED AFTER ALL OUR CASES TOGETHER WHY PHYSICAL EVIDENCE IS SO IMPORTANT TO ME, SCOLDER?
YOU ALREADY HAVE FAITH IN YOUR CONVICTIONS--
"--WHEREAS I WANT TO BELIEVE.
... further investigation of Lucas Air Force Base revealed some experimentation had been conducted there, but nothing since the late 80's, leaving Eddie Collins and the woman code-named 'Particle' as the only corroborating evidence that something unusual took place.
Though I am somewhat skeptical of anything more turning up, Agent Scolder is convinced...
"... the truth is out there!"
Dedicated to Chris ("I made this!") Carter